

Return to Use Initiative

2006 Demonstration Project

Flura Corporation: Newport, Tennessee

THE SITE: The Flura Chemical Corporation Superfund site was once home to an industrial chemical manufacturing and synthesizing laboratory. While in operation, the Flura Corporation used a large volume and variety of chemicals, including a variety of gases, acids, caustics, flammable liquids, reactive compounds, volatile organic compounds, and halogenated compounds. In 2000, EPA conducted a time-critical removal action to remove and treat hundreds of shock-sensitive, friction-sensitive, and/or explosive waste containers filled with toxic and lethal chemicals and gases. Hundreds of cylinders containing highly reactive or poisonous gases were also removed from the site and treated. EPA excavated contaminated soils from hazardous waste burial areas, removed containers that had leaked wastes and chemicals, and repaired a contaminated drainage sink. The excavated area was then filled with clean soil and wildflowers were planted on the site. In total, thousands of containers and drums were removed, and hundreds of pounds of liquid acids were neutralized. A fence was placed around the perimeter to deter trespassers from accessing the site.

THE OPPORTUNITY: The On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) has said that the site is ready for recreational reuse. Trees and flowers now grow on the hilltop where the laboratory once stood. The State of Tennessee has expressed interest in purchasing the site for recreational reuse. The local community has also expressed interest in a public recreational use for the property.

THE BARRIER: At one time, national media cited EPA officials calling the Flura Corporation site one of the southeastern United States' five worst-ever sites. Due to the nature of the contaminants on the site and the publicity the site received, a heavy stigma shrouds the property and surrounding area.

THE SOLUTION: To help address stigma issues with the site, the OSC noted that the cleanup process was well documented, and public involvement during the cleanup process ensured that the local community was informed and satisfied with the cleanup efforts. With the support of the Return to Use initiative (RTU), the OSC thinks the site will be put into successful reuse. EPA will work with interested site users to clarify liability information. A number of informational documents are available to help to answer prospective purchasers' or other stakeholders' questions.

THE SITE NOW: The Flura Corporation site is now a scenic hilltop covered with wildflowers at the base of the Smoky Mountains. A local Boy Scout troop reportedly uses the hilltop as a campsite. Some would like to make the area into an official public campground; others in the community would like to see an RV park. Fencing remains around the site to deter trespassers and vandalism, and there is an ATV trail around the perimeter of the fence.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Dean Ullock, Region 4 On-Scene Coordinator at (251) 441-5913 or ullock.dean@epa.gov; or Bill Denman, Region 4 Superfund Redevelopment Coordinator at (404) 562-8939 or denman.bill@epa.gov.

Barrier:

Superfund site stigma

Solution:

Ongoing efforts to provide clear and understandable information about the site and its reasonably anticipated future land uses

Before:

Cleaned up open hilltop in the Smoky Mountains, plagued by high-profile media coverage of its former hazardous and toxic waste

After:

Potential future recreation area for community members